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Strategies for Teaching New Words in Elementary School Students

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Annotation: Learning foreign languages in modern society is becoming an integral part of the professional training of specialists in various fields, and the successful solution of issues of professional growth and expansion of contacts with foreign partners largely depends on the quality of their language training. Thus, pupils get basic knowledge of English at school, especially in the primary grades, and teachers have to interest and teach them by enriching their foreign language vocabulary.

Keywords: English, vocabulary learning, knowledge, teacher, strategy.

Often pupils have the problem of choosing appropriate words for a particular situation and the problem of understanding unfamiliar words when reading texts or communicating in a foreign language. Therefore, it is necessary to develop from the first lessons a “sense of language” in the students, the ability to guess the meaning of a word from the context, which helps to solve these problems. We will tell you about several strategies that teachers can use to make children learn new words and expressions right in the classroom.

Research shows that vocabulary instruction should contain the following components:

- ✓ Definition and contextual information about the word.
- ✓ Repeated exposure to the word in different contexts.
- ✓ Encouraging active independent learning of new words by students.

Here are 10 vocabulary-learning activities for you to incorporate into your lesson:

Strategy 1. Graphic Organizer

Draw out an A4 sheet of paper into four rectangles. On the intersection of these lines, write the word or phrase you need to memorize. Sign each rectangle, starting from the upper left in a clockwise direction:

- *Description: Define the term using your own words.*
- *Characteristics: Give at least 3 interesting characteristics of the term.*
- *Synonym: What is it like?*
- *Antonym: What is it not like?*

Students use their vocabulary to fill in the rectangles. They complete them with pictures or diagrams.

The “Graphic organizer” method of memorization helps students learn new words. If you define new vocabulary units in your own words, give examples of familiar situations and visual images, and then any word will be imprinted in the memory for a long time. How to work with the graphic organizer in the classroom:

- **Preparation.** Determine a list of words to study within a particular topic. Working with a group of 3-4 students, have each group study one word.
- **Mini demonstration.** Explain to the class what a graphic organizer is and tell them how to fill in the boxes.
- **Group work.** Facilitate students’ work on new words by discussing with each group the word they are given. Use leading questions to prompt the group to think in the direction you want them to think.
- **Class discussion.** Assign one student from the group to present their word. Allow the members of the different teams to interact with each other and get to know the other words. Allow 2-3 minutes for this so as not to interrupt the rhythm of the lesson.

Strategy 2. Vocabulary Graffiti

This type of activity in the classroom allows pupils to acquire vocabulary skills by drawing pictures, telling a story with a picture, and writing phrases and words with associations. If the words you need to memorize are associated with objects, have pupils create posters of those words.

Organize work in pairs. Give each pair a target word. If this is the first time you are using this strategy, discuss with the class what associations these words evoke. Direct students’ thoughts in the direction you want them to go. For example, if the target word was war, the associations it evokes are aggression, battle, conflict, destruction, and so on.

Students sketch the words on a sheet of paper, like graffiti on a wall. They draw the images they get from these words.

How is the result to be graded? The work is graded “excellent” if:

- ✓ Students gave the correct definition of the word.
- ✓ At least three new words show that students understand the term correctly.
- ✓ At least three images represent the term.
- ✓ The poster page is eye-catching.
- ✓ There are no grammatical errors in the words.

The teacher places the best posters in the classroom. Schoolchildren surrounded by these words while learning a topic. The bright pictures attract their attention. In this way, the teacher repeatedly introduces students to the meanings of new words.

Strategy 3. Guessing the meaning of a word

This is a great way to introduce new vocabulary. You can use it as a prelude to reading a new text in class. You use it to teach children to guess the meaning of a word from the context.

In the new text, identify 4-5 words whose meaning is important to understand. Have pupils write these words down and write what they mean.

You may wish to display this activity in a worksheet in a notebook:

New words	Before reading	After reading

As you read, use thinking aloud to show how the context gives meaning to the new word. After reading the entire text, analyze pupils' guesses, and what was each word actually means.

Strategy 4. Basic Prefixes

Often in lessons while working on dialogic speech the teacher encounters a problem – the pupils are afraid to communicate in a foreign language because they lack words. Help them cope with this situation by introducing them to the table of prefixes. Write it down in a notebook or hang it on the wall in the classroom. Point out how prefixes help change the meaning of words pupils are familiar with them.

At the beginning stage of language learning, this chart should include basic prefixes that will allow pupils to create new words on their own.

Prefix	Meaning	Prefix	Meaning
un	not, opposite of	re	Again
in, im, ir, il	Not	dis	not, opposite of
en, em	cause to	non	Not
in, im	in or into	over	too much
mis	Wrongly	sub	Under

Strategy 5. Word/Tag Cloud

A tag cloud is a collection of key words or information selected from a passage or chapter that pupils are about to read. This strategy gives students a chance to connect new words or information to the main idea of the reading text. It helps to retell the main content of the text well.

There are plenty of resources online to help analyze the text and create a word cloud. The teacher can print out the cloud and bring it to class. Nevertheless, if there is an interactive whiteboard in the classroom, it will make it easier to create the cloud.

How to use the tag cloud in foreign language lessons?

- For text analysis. The teacher can draw pupils' attention to the frequency of words used in the text (the most frequently used highlighted in larger font). Alternatively, to compare texts through word clouds.

- To guess a story from the words presented in the cloud.
- To conduct a simple survey. For example, schoolchildren had to work with a new text at home. The teacher creates a word cloud based on this text. The pupils read out the words whose meaning they have learned.
- In lessons to repeat a topic. The teacher demonstrates a cloud of words of the topic, and the schoolchildren repeat them. They create sentences or word combinations with them.

Strategy 6. Interviewing the word.

Why does not turn vocabulary work into a game? With this strategy, students will repeat and summarize what they have learned in studying a particular topic.

- ✓ Choose key words that are important to understanding the topic.
- ✓ Divide the class into groups of two to four.
- ✓ Give each team a word and a list of interview questions. The other teams should not know what their opponents' word is.
- ✓ Ask pupils to "become" the word and write answers to the questions.
- ✓ Without revealing the word, the teacher or pupil acts as the interviewer and asks the questions, and team members read their written answers. After the interview, the class guesses the word.

Strategy 7. Grouping Words.

Provide the class with a list of words for the topic you are studying. Pupils should group them into different categories (parts of speech, human character, clothing, school). Make the game more difficult. Have your schoolchildren make their own lists of words, and have their classmates guess what the selection is based on.

Strategy 8. Word System.

Make the traditional vocabulary check an activity for learning new words. Have pupils understand a new word, such as *prediction*. On an A4 sheet of paper, they should write down:

- Definition of the word based on their own understanding (top right corner). For example, *foretelling* or *look forward*.
- The antonym of that word in the opposite (top left) corner. *Look backward*.
- Write a funny or silly sentence using your definition of the word (bottom left corner).
- Draw a sketch to help visualize the definition of the word (bottom right corner).

Strategy 9. Crossword Puzzle

Unbelievably, crossword puzzles are a great way for pupils to boost vocabulary. This strategy can be used in the first lesson of a new topic. Schoolchildren remember the words they will use in the next lessons.

A crossword puzzle is a great way to review what has been learned before a quiz. Invite the pupils to make a crossword puzzle based on the new words in the lesson. They will repeat their spelling and remember their meanings. For weaker schoolchildren, you can attach a thematic list of words to the crossword puzzle so they can choose appropriate ones.

Strategy 10. Words that used together

Draw pupils' attention to words that are always used together. This can be done in several ways:

- ✓ Present two lists of words; you need to connect the words from each group in pairs.
- ✓ Demonstrate word combinations of a verb and a noun. For example, *make + friends, do + your homework.*
- ✓ You can suggest creating compound nouns: *snow + boarding, wind + surfing, mountain + biking.*
- ✓ Combine a verb or adjective with a preposition: *listen + to, look + at, agree + with, good + at, interested + in.*

Of course, the lexical structure of any language is extensive to memorize. The teacher can be advised to emphasize the ways in which schoolchildren memorize new words and reading comprehension. The teacher's job is to help pupils develop a "sense of language", an ability to notice phrases and words that will help them to communicate or to describe situations directly related to them. It is hoped that the development of these abilities in schoolchildren will go beyond the activities of the foreign language lesson.

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